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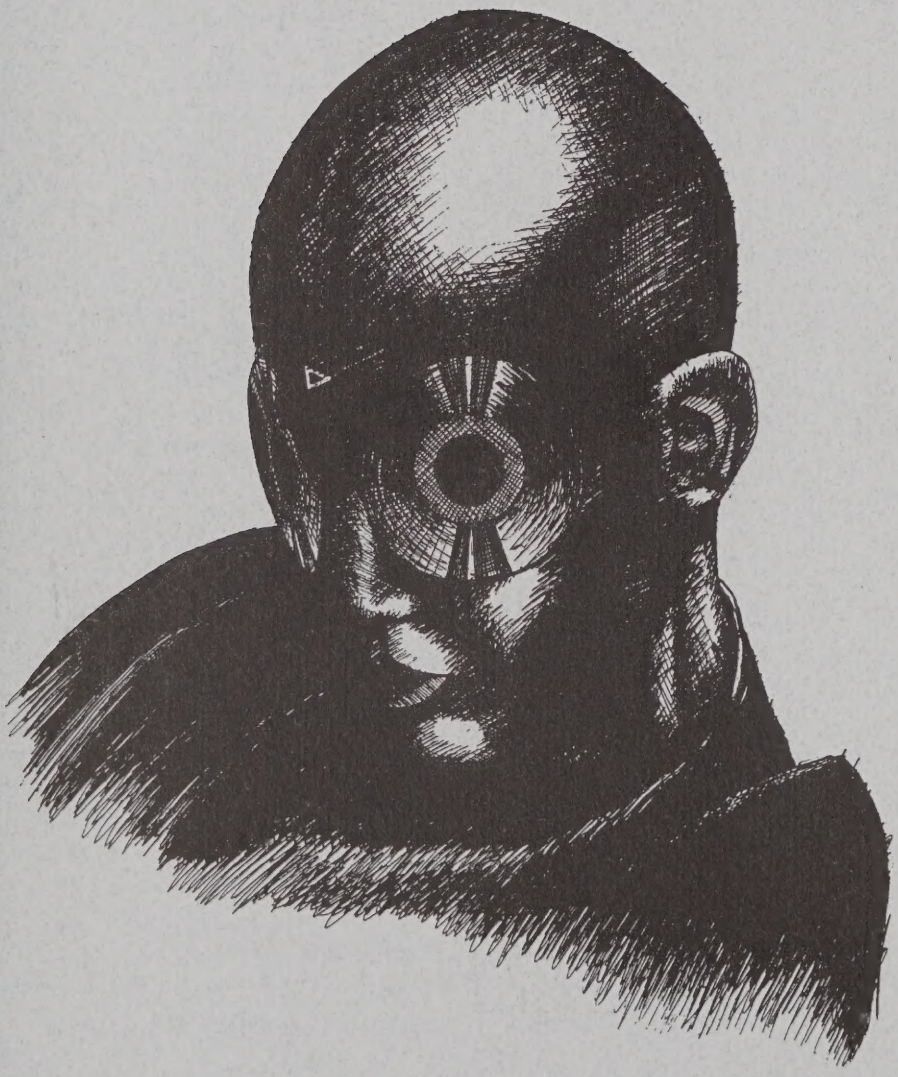

FMphasis

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In this issue:

Fugazi
Toad the Wet Sprocket
Super Hussy
Poster Children
Samples
Rusted Root
Philistines Junior
Foo Fighters

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Fugazi Rocks the Annex

by Jonathan Howard

Sunday, April 9, fans of the Washington DC based band, Fugazi, were treated to ninety minutes of loose, jammin' versions of their older material as well as about a half dozen songs to be featured on their upcoming album. Ian MacKaye and Co., started out the eighth show of their first tour since 1993 with their traditional trash-talking of body surfing and other pit-related activities. As seems to often be the case, they were immediately greeted by "fuck you"s from the peanut gallery and were quick to respond with their own insults, directed at one particular gentleman who seemed to be especially distraught at the idea of scorning body-surfing. They opened with an intense, sonically overwhelming "Brendan # One" and, despite recent problems ("stolen guitars, sprained ankles...") that could hinder a band's performance, they drove through their set with unremitting energy and quality music.

The quartet dished out a well-balanced smorgasbord of old, recent, and new material, not seeming to favor any one of their four albums, (they did not announce a release date for their new disk). However, for someone who had never heard Fugazi, it would be difficult to discern new material from old as their albums never stray from the same style, sound, and structure as was introduced in Thirteen Songs, their first LP. But, the intensity they possess in their live show makes up for any deficiency one could nit-pick out of their recordings.

Fugazi, though not as tight as they were in their 1993 tour, showed an unusual propensity to jam with their older songs, playing no more than about a dozen songs yet playing for an hour and a half. This new twist was exhibited best in the sonically dynamic "Suggestion" which the band dedicated to the recent NOW sponsored march in DC protesting violence against women. The band, starting a trend that they would continue for the rest of the night, seemed hesitant to finish the song, bringing it to an apparent denouement only to break into the main melody and carry on for several more minutes.

Surprisingly, Fugazi didn't play their traditional political anthems, "Waiting Room" and "Merchandise". However, their new material made up for any disappointment as they tore into

song after song that no one other than they and their groupies had ever heard. The band probably realized the risk of playing unknown songs at a live show and wisely dispersed them throughout the set, thus avoiding any lulls that could potentially kill an audience's enthusiasm. Their best new song was a catchy (though not cheesy), intense tune featuring bassist Joe Lally on vocals for the first time in the band's history.

After the show, exhausted and invigorated, I stumbled out of the pit to be greeted by two guys reeking of substance abuse and dung. "Is that it?" one of them asked me. "Well...yeah", I replied "that was the encore". They sagged their sweatless shoulders and said with obvious disappointment "ah fuck them, don't the Dead play two encores?" Walking away from them, my friends and I laughed and told them the painful truth: "they aren't the Dead". Perhaps in the future they won't show up to a 7:00 punk show at 11:30 expecting to hear century-old tunes by a bunch of hippies with one foot in the grave. At show's end though, with the exception of the previously mentioned go-nowheres, I doubt there was a hint of dissatisfaction anywhere in the crowd.

The opening acts, Karate and Unwound, displayed very different playing styles. Karate played melodious, slow, art rockish music which was generally boring. Unwound was able to liven things up with an exciting set of angry noise-rock powered by abrasive guitars and catchy rhythms. All in all, it was a night of fun, rock, and angst like I thought I would never have in this, the land of the granola people.

Toad the Wet Sprocket and Rusted Root *at UVM*

by David Diamonon

The six-member musical conglomeration known as Rusted Root opened up the show April 28. They used a mix of guitars, bass, a flute, and an arsenal of percussion instruments to mesmerize the crowd with primal beats. In addition, much instrument switching occurred, as the guy on drums once took over on bass, allowing the bass player to let loose on electric guitar, while the flutist sat behind the vacated trap set. The band had energy that was easy for the audience to feed on, making people move. I stumbled across one of their CD's at the station, listened to it for awhile, and decided they definitely sounded better live. In Rusted Root's case, the physical presentation of the music truly adds to an appreciation of their talent.

After Rusted Root's effective warm-up set, Toad the Wet Sprocket took to the stage, kicking off their second appearance in Burlington with "Fly from Heaven," the opening track on their latest release, Dulcinea. Performing barefoot, lead vocalist and backup guitarist Todd Nichols was true to form. Lead guitarist Glen Phillips displayed his mastery of driving the music on with his varying style of play. Bassist Dean Dinning provided the essential backbeat and lent his usual support on backup vocals. And Randy Guss rounded the music out with the necessary, but albeit subtle, presence of drums in Toad's songs. To the crowd's delight, these boys from Santa Monica played true to their recordings, not indulging in any kind of bizarre jam session.

The choice of songs for the main set was dominated by tracks from Dulcinea, punctuated with some tunes from their 1991 album, Fear. In fact, immediately following "Fly from Heaven" were two songs from Fear : "Is It for Me" and the ever popular "All I Want." Speaking for the band, Todd Nichols occasionally said a little tidbit about this or that to introduce a song. He even teased the audience, talking about how "sometimes you're with someone for the first time, and you're looking for something to say, but you can't think of something to say" (hinting that they were about to play "Something to Say"), only to go on further with, "but then you say something really dumb, you blow it, and you feel really stupid." He then broke into song — none other than "Stupid."

From the main set only two songs departed from the last two releases — "Brother," from the soundtrack of So I Married an Axe Murderer, and "Come Back Down," from their second album, Pale. Both these songs were made memorable for different reasons. The performance of "Come Back Down" marked a highlight of the concert, as a hush came over the crowd to let Nichols' lone voice be heard undisturbed. In turn, "Brother" was preceded by an anecdote narrated again by Nichols. When he was much younger, every summer his family would take a trip up to Sacramento to see their state's capital. Nichols decided that somehow he would enrich himself by twenty dollars. So, he managed to take a twenty out of his dad's pocket, then put it on the ground, picked it up, and exclaimed, "Hey! I found twenty dollars! I found twenty dollars!" But he felt guilty over it, so he gave half to his brother. Years later he decided to admit his little crime to his father and continued to express regret periodically. Once, in the presence of his brother, Nichols bemoaned the fact that he was such a spoiled little punk as a kid. To which his brother replied, "No, you were a good kid! Remember that twenty bucks you found and split with me?"

Such humor was prevalent throughout the concert, but the band did take a moment to recognize a serious matter. After playing "Hold Her Down," a song whose lyrics, to an almost disturbing degree, address rape, Nichols held up a flyer for the newly established Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network hotline (RAINN), and pointed out to the crowd that more information could be found at the booth outside.

The mood quickly changed as Nichols announced they would then play a "happy song." Glen Phillips then surprised me, at least, by taking the leading vocals on "Inside." The haunting "Stories I Tell" followed, and they ended the set with the first hit off of the new album, "Fall Down."

The audience wouldn't stand for such a short performance, and they applauded for an encore. "Nightingale Song" was first to be played, then Nichols displayed more of his sense of humor by playing parts of many songs such as "You Really Got Me," "Sunday Bloody Sunday," and some song by Van Halen. They did indeed play a cover, but it was one that they

had actually recorded before — a tune by Neil Young, Cinnamon Girl. The third, and final, song of the first encore entailed Dinning's switching over to keyboards and Nichols picking up the bass — the seminal Toad song: "Walk on the Ocean." They left the stage again, only to be called back once more by applause, screams, and foot-stamping. Nichols introduced the finale simply, "This is a love song," and sang the thoughtful words of "I Will Not Take These Things for Granted." After hearing and seeing Toad the Wet Sprocket live, the fans walked away knowing to do just that.

Interview with the Hussy

by David Diamonon

The Middlebury College Community is graced with the presence of many talented young musicians who have come together in bands. Some just have a good time, playing covers of other groups' songs, while others strive for originality. Last Friday I had the pleasure of meeting with two members of Super Hussy, a band hailing from the latter kind here at Middlebury. No doubt, they are unique. There is no substitute for the musical entity known to the world at large as Super Hussy. Indeed, who would dare imitate them? Don't be intimidated by their names. Negatron Rousseau and Superfly Jules Tonka truly are just two regular guys. It's just that they're rock stars.

WRMC: Just who is Super Hussy?

Negatron: Super Hussy is a doll. And everyone is Super Hussy, and Super Hussy is everyone.

Superfly: Because everyone is a hussy, and everyone has the potential to be super.

WRMC: And just who are the other members of Super Hussy, in absentia?

Negatron: Star Spangled Ginger on guitar and King Slang on nerve guitar.

WRMC: How long has the band been together?

Negatron: Been together about six months or something.

WRMC: So, how did it happen, you guys getting together?

Negatron: We didn't know each other. We all happened to be shopping in Ben Franklin's the same day, and a really — not traumatic — but an accident occurred. We all stumbled, by chance, across this naked woman wrapped in plastic, and then we basically banded together to save it.

Superfly: Yeah, this woman must have a story. We'll call it Super Hussy.

WRMC: Tell me, just what kind of music do you play, if there's a name for it?

Negatron & Superfly: Oh, there's a name. Improvisational, noise, subjective. . . assaultive, glam, grease. Can we say grease? Yeah, grease.

WRMC: What's glam? Just for everyone's information?

Negatron: Glam's a style of rock 'n' roll based on extravagance bred on looks and promiscuity.

WRMC: Where would you say the source of your inspiration lies?

Negatron: We're just a bunch of good friends having a good time. We get inspired by antagonism. I do, at least.

Superfly: These were questions I was jokingly preparing to answer earlier. (expletive)! What did I think of?

WRMC: Who's been your greatest influence in terms of bands?

Negatron: Bands? That's such a boring question. You should be writing this down, too.

Superfly: Well. . . Karaoke Hustler, Spore, Kiss, Eric Dolphy, the Stooges, Bikini Kill. Definitely list Karaoke Hustler first.

WRMC: Do you have your tour all set? Where will you go?

Negatron: All over the East Coast, Midwest, Europe. We're going to take a Siberian route. Can we work Japan?

Superfly: Yeah, we can work Japan.

WRMC: Any tour dates available for the adoring public?

Negatron: Yeah, some dates are available, but nothing for right now.

WRMC: On a completely different note, what do you think of the mainstream?

Negatron: It's corrupt.

Superfly: We're the mainstream.

WRMC: So, how would you handle it if some big company wanted to exploit you?

Superfly: We want to be exploited. We've got a price, you just have to name it.

Negatron: We can't just give our shit away! Well, yeah, we can.

WRMC: Is there anything else you'd like to add? Anything I haven't asked about? This could also be shameless plug time.

Negatron: We're coming out with a 7-inch. We want to see how far we can take the tour, and at the end of it, we'll go back into the studio and record.

Superfly: We want to acquire solar generators, so we can play wherever we want.

WRMC: What was the best highlight of the year for you?

Negatron: For me, it was definitely getting a letter from Spore, saying we were really good, they liked us a lot. We sent them a tape.

WRMC: What did they say exactly?

Negatron: They said it was really good, they liked it a lot.

Superfly: My highlight was having a sword fight with King Slang in the archways of Yale. Actually, the Yale gig was another highlight.

WRMC: What made it so memorable?

Negatron: The Yale gig was frustrating because they were so fuckin' uptight, and they were giving us shit the whole night. Then we got up there and blew minds. We made their lives miserable.

Superfly: Yeah, that's really it.

WRMC: How were they giving you shit?

Negatron: It was just another band we were playing with. Stuck-up, lame Yalies. They were giving us shit, telling us to cut our set short. We don't take that kind of crap.

Interview with the Samples

Topher Lewis
May 7, 1995
Interviewers: Topher Lewis (T) and Justin Cook (Ju)
The Samples: Sean—Lead Vocals (S) and Jeep—Percussion (Je)

Justin and I climbed aboard the bus during the late afternoon of April 28th, the day that The Samples played at Pepin Gymnasium here at Middlebury College. Jeep complained about how hot the bus was and Sean commented on the overwhelming fragrance of aerosol spray masking the smell of pot. Jeep opened a window and we sat down in the southwestern style common room of the tour bus to begin the interview:

T: Well, to start off, where is your favorite place to play?
S: Middlebury, definitely Middlebury.
Je: Giants Stadium.
S: Besides Giants Stadium it's Middlebury.
T: Good answer.
Je: The Mid-west is killer. I mean, we have our rowdiest shows in the Mid-west—Chicago, well Boston is good too.
S: Vermont always rocks.
T: You're (Sean) from Burlington, aren't you?
S: Yea.
Ju: Half of you guys are from the Burlington area and half from Colorado—is that the way it works?
Je: He's (Sean) from Burlington, I'm from Ohio.
T: Are you guys ready for some deep questions?
S & Je: Yea, sure
T: I know in the past your guys' sound has been labeled as "nature rock"....
S: Tonight is the last night that happens.
T: Well, what sounds are you moving towards? I know you've done a solo album.
S: It's not about sounds, it's about image. We're gonna break our image. We're gonna start becoming like The Rolling Stones, or a really bad version of them.
Je: Our music is always really changing. It depends on what kind of music you listen to. For me it definitely does. For the first album I used to listen to a lot of Reggae, and all of the

drumming was really Reggae influenced. Nowadays I listen to a lot of speed metal. It's just more attitude. Last Drag we went for a lot more mid-tempo, soothe-sounding stuff. Our music is always changing. We always get shit a bit 'cause people want us to regurgitate the first album. It's amazing how much of that stuff we still play live 'cause we have to....Just now we play it differently.'

T: What is your favorite album so far of your stuff?

Je: I like No Room and Autopilot.

S: I like The Last Drag a lot. The more slow stuff is my vibe.

Je: Everytime we put out a new album we think that it is the best.

T: You talked about your influences of music. What do you guys listen to? What was the last CD you bought?

S: I just bought a Milla tape the other day....She's like a model, she's like twenty-three years old. She was in that funny High School movie. What was that?

Je: Fast Times at Ridgemont High? Wierd Science? Real Genius? St. Elmo's Fire?

S: She's beautiful—you'd recognize her.

Je: I listen to a lot of Pantera, Sugar. I listen to a lot of R & B and rap. I love Ministry. Nine Inch Nails I like a lot—a little bit of everything.

S: Hey, I listen to Milla. Have you heard of her?

Je: We did like four tours and he (Sean) listened to like one tape the whole time, and that was it.

S: I listen to one tape, and that's it. I like words and melody. He (Jeep) obviously plays percussion, so he likes the gay, kind of stupid stuff.

Ju: How does the music writing process work for you guys?

Je: All different combinations—sometimes songs will evolve from jams we play during a sound check, or extended jams that we play in a live song. We also write songs individually and bring them to the rest of the band.

Ju: I know you wrote one song on Autopilot and No Room.

Je: Well, actually I played guitar.

Ju: Well, you play everything.

Je: We all play everything, and we all have our own 8-tracks at home to record on.

T: Where do you spend most of your time when you're not on tour?

Je: In Colorado, and in Malibu....we have permanent residencies in Boulder....but up to a year ago we all sort of lived in hotels.
Ju: I was wondering, do you guys get off when you play with a guy like Bramford? Like on Underwater People?
S: Oh yes...it went really fast, in Boulder Theater. Yea, he just came and went. He was just playing in Denver...
T: What about opening bands? I know you played with Lir and In the Attic.
S: They (In the Attic) were a bunch of drunks....
Je: But we don't really choose our opening bands. Lir was on W.A.R. with us when we were on it.
Ju: How did the whole deal with Arista collapse?
Je: They just decided to start changing our music and stuff. We were getting ready to start recording songs for No Room and those songs we had already been playing live for a year—and everybody liked them. When we went into the studio they started changing our songs around. They didn't like "Did You Ever Look So Nice." They wanted to take a lot of the Reggaeish element out of it, so we just left. But now with Hollywood we have the same kind of deal that we had with W.A.R. We have complete creative control, only we have a little bit more of a machine behind us.
Ju: Was W.A.R. something that you guys constructed?
Je: We started at the same time. But we were the flagship band for them. But we didn't construct them.
T: O.K., I suppose I could ask the famous question—Boxers or Briefs?
S: Nothing, I just let it hang.
Je: G-strings for me.
S: Speaking of nudity, a couple of nights ago our sound man, and a lighting guy, and Al were caught running around naked, and they got arrested. But we're gonna fight it. It's kind of ridiculous that you can get arrested for being in your birthday suit. I think the problem was that they were drinking...
Je: Well, also George Clinton was playing, 'cause we were playing at a festival with Sonic Youth and George Clinton and they got up on the stage...
S: While they were playing—that's the funny part. But they got handcuffed and brought down to the station butt-naked.
Ju: Are you guys content with your position right now? Is this where you want to be?

S: Well, we're in a transition, so that's a good place to be. But I think that has to do with us not liking where we were. But W.A.R. was a small label. We tour seven months out of the year. We do work very hard. It's really hard to get it across from touring. It's really grueling. It's also fun and it's a blast, but we bump into people who don't know we have a new album out, or they ask us if we ever come to the East Coast, and they're from a town where we've been like twenty times and they're like....
Je: 'Do you guys ever come to New York?' And we've been going there for the past seven years.
S: We're in a good spot since we've worked our way up from the Arista thing. We probably know what we don't want more that what we do want. We don't want the things that went wrong with Arista. W.A.R. was great and fine, but the contract was up and it was time to move on. So this is a definite good position to be in. We're gonna take this summer off...we just recorded a live album, I did something on my own, and we'll make another one in August that'll come out in January.
Ju: Are you going to do it the same way—the Colorado Style?
S: Yea, I don't know, but we'll have the big guns behind us. It's not about selling out....
Je: It's just frustrating to think that there might be people out there who would like our music, but who haven't heard us. And that's simply because the only thing we've got going for us is touring. Once the touring stops, the band stops. After a while that can be a little too much pressure.
Ju: What do you see changing with the new Hollywood contract? Are you optimistic?
S: Yea, because we constructed the contract.
Ju: Bigger Venues?
S: No, because that just has to do with popularity—it rises and you play bigger places.
Ju: Is that something you want?
S: If enough people were into our music and we had to play big places like that, it would be fine. I think it would still be a blast. We already put on shows that are of that quality...with huge movies, serious light shows....
Je: Touring wise, yea...we're in a weird position because bands that you see on MTV that everybody's heard about, touring-wise, don't do as well as bands like us. We come and play places and do fairly big shows, and do well touring, but we get

off the road and nobody's heard of us. So it would be cool to have the other side of our careers boosted.
Ju: Do you guys have any rapport with any other bands?
S: Yea. I just found out Fugazi listens to our music.
Je: There's a lot of bands that we play with—like Dave Matthews. We used to play a bunch of shows with them, and we might tour with them this summer. Those guys are all great.

Interview with Poster Children

Justin Shipman
Jonathan Howard

How long have you been on tour, since April...March?

Rose- Yeah, middle of march.
Rick- We did a two week European tour starting in Mainz on the 11th
Rose- And then we came back for one day, and then we left on tour of the States.
Rick- March 30th.
Rose- So it's been several weeks now, it's getting to be our longest tour.

Do you like being on the road, and playing different sites?

Rick- Yeah, you sort of have to...
Rose- We just came from the cess-pool that is New York. I just noticed that anywhere you go in New York City it smells like urine. No matter what, I mean, the most expensive, fancy restaurants smell like urine, and you know, the bathrooms...
Rick- Well, not inside...
Rose-No, everything...there's always that little over-smell of urine, and once we got out of there, you know, the whole,..like on the way here on 930 or whatever, oh man, it's so beautiful, just driving past lakes and stuff. I can't...I don't know how you people can study in a place like this. When you go to college, you're supposed to be, like, studying...the whole place is supposed to look like a parking lot. You know, you're supposed to be sitting in the middle of a parking lot, and you know, on Fridays you go out, and get drunk or whatever, but I mean, how can you study with such beautiful scenery?

It works out, cause as soon as it gets warm, all the fertilizer and stuff starts to thaw and so it smells like dung. Which you're actually lucky (indicating the cold weather) because you'd be coming from urine over to dung.

Rose- There's something real earthy about the dung smell though, and there's something completely unearthy about urine.

These are my own views, they do not necessarily represent the views of Poster Children, thank you very much...

And we just found Friday morning that you did a Descendants cover, "I Don't Wanna Grow Up"...

Rose- (suspiciously) How did you find that out?

Umm, the disc was at the radio station. Is Descendants one of your influential bands, or anything?

Rick- We definitely listened to them when we were younger and uh, I remember they played in Champaign once before...before Poster Children was together, we didn't open for them, but one of our friend's bands did, and they were all violently ill. They were on tour obviously, for like months on end and they were all, like, uh, near death. That was like our first impression of the road and it was from those guys.
Rose- Wow, cool, yeah...The guy, the lead singer guy, man he had glasses thicker than yours (looking at Rick), that's what I remember. I remember thinking' "Wow, geeks can play rock n roll. That's cool." You know, and people, you know, "he's so cool and he's a geek!"

Uh, if they were still around today do you think they'd start "Sour Grapes" with maybe "Hey you Post Wave", instead of "New Wave"?

Rick- (pause...uncomfortable laugh) Uh, I don't know.

And this is the first time you've played in Vermont?

Rick- Yeah actually...
Rose- This is the first time...we'll be conquering Vermont on this tour.

I'd like to apologize on behalf of the school that it has to start this way (indicating weather again), bad weather, it's a windy day...

Rose-Oh no...I mean...when we played Oklahoma...
Rick- We don't get to play outdoors that much. So that's really cool.

Rose- We played Oklahoma this tour too.
Rick- We did stay in Vermont once, though. One of the guys who helped put out our first tape, ages ago, lived in Vermont for awhile, worked at a radio station in Vermont that broadcast tours all day...
Rose- That doesn't count.
Rick- That doesn't count.
Rose- We haven't played yet.
Rick- No, we haven't played yet, but we did stay here a couple times.

Are there any...You've hit just about every state. Are there any couple states missing?

Rose- We haven't played in Maine or Nevada, Alaska or Hawaii...
Rick- New Hampshire
Rose- ...and New Hampshire. And I think there's one more...
Rick- Mississippi, right? We haven't played Mississippi.
Rose- That's right. And Alabama, we haven't played Alabama...
Rick- We played Ala...yeah, we haven't played Alabama. There's actually quite a few. We haven't played...did we play Wyoming? I'd like to play Wyoming.
Rose- That may be all though. I remember thinking there were nine that we haven't played.
Rick- We haven't played Nevada either.
Rose- You said that.
Rick- Oh...
Rose- (Jim, Rick's brother and guitarist, tries to escape) Jim! Come back and help us.
Jim- I have to go to the bathroom.

Um, okay, this is kind of an off-the-wall question. How long does it take you to get the computer image inside the "Tool of the Man" disc? Are you pretty good at it by now?

Rick- I can't do it. Rose can do it but I can't. That's Rose's little area in fact. I still have to hold it up...I can do it, actually if I hold it up and put my finger behind it, and sort of look at my finger, instead of the sheet of paper and just let my eyes fix. Very complex process for me. I can't really do any of those things.

Yeah, I have to look at it in the plastic, and look at the reflection.

Rose-Yeah
Rick- Right

I can't even do it, I have...my cornea's messed up in my left eye, and so I'm like one of five percent of the population of the world who can't do it.

Rick- Right, I could never do it with my glasses. Once I got contact lenses again, I think it's much easier. But with my glasses it was impossible.
Rose-It took me like forty-five minutes to see the first one that I...
Rick- Yeah, it took me ages to see the first one...
Rose- But my dad...
Rick- ...and I never got it
Rose- Like my dad, when I put it in front of him, he goes "Oh my God! That's so cool!" I'm like "What's so cool? What are you talking about?" And he just said that right then, and I went "You don't see the picture..." he goes "Yeah I do!" And like he explained it, you know, the right picture and everything.

I have a friend like that, she's practiced, she can look at them like a book.

Rose- But like my dad had never seen one before.
Rick- He must be far-sighted or something.

You had that out pretty early before the books and posters came out.

Rose- I know. I feel like the guy who got the Bart Simpson tattoo way before the Simpsons came out. You know, like when the Simpsons were like this obscure cartoon on the Tracy Ullman show, you know, and like Matt Groening was known more for "Binky" the little bunny.
Rick- There's a sound guy who got a Bart Simpson cartoon tattooed on his foot or his ankle, and then all of a sudden...
Rose- And years later all of a sudden...

Rick- (impersonating sound guy) What do I have on my foot!
Rose- But, uh, yeah. I mean those...it's so easy to get the software to create those things. It's a photo-shop filter now.

While we're speaking of computers, we have computers...we have a computer center down there if you want to check e-mail or something like that...

Rose- Do you have Mosaic?

Yeah, actually we do.

Rose- Hmm. We can look and see if our Web page works. I keep...you know I update the Web page while we're on tour and stuff. I'll update every couple of days and then like the other day I totally added a whole bunch of stuff to it, and um, you know like I mis-capitalized the headings to the little quick-time movies that I added, so it didn't work and I got all this mail (impersonating angry Webbers) "Hey, your Web page doesn't work!" God, sorry, no way of testing it.

Um, let's see, okay, so you're signed to Sire, and Junior Citizen's on top ten of CMJ New Music List...I don't know, are you prepared to become pop icons?

Rose- We've been signed to Sire for years and years now.
Rick- I don't know, yeah...I...heh heh...
Rose- I don't think we'd even know if that happened. You know, we'd still be driving around, and, other bands when they get really famous or something, all of a sudden they have tour buses or tour managers, and roadies and stuff, and people to sell their T-shirts.
Rick- And that's before they're famous...
Rose- Yeah, most of the time before they're famous. You know, it's never going to happen to us, I don't think, not for awhile anyway.
Rick- I think we never really thought about that kind of stuff. It's always been sort of more day to day, like, or at least year to year. Like "Let's make a record. Let's go on tour." That kind of stuff. It's never...you know, "Let's....you know, do well". "Let's be Top 40 artists in ten years" kind of garbage like that, so in terms of

being prepared for, you know, yeah, we're not, just because we don't think about...It's not really on our list of things to think about, really...
Rose- Better to ask us if we're prepared to play, you know, a 3,000 seat show or something, that's the kind of stuff we live for.
Rick- A three thousand seat show with Matthew Sweet at Indianapolis.
Rose- AAAAAAAAAAAAAH! That's the next gig after this. And I say gig because it's Matthew Sweet.
Rick- ...we'll see what happens. We don't have to worry about Matthew Sweet, we're worried about the audience. Cause Matthew Sweet's fine because...well...yeah, it's the people who are going to be there that we're worried about.

OK, that's reassuring. Um...now...Valentin brothers, you're brother's right?

Rick- Yup.

Um, is there a story to how the band got started, or...

Jim- Mmmmnnno.
Rick- Not really. Actually Jim wasn't in the band originally, sort of... came on board...
Jim- To save the band.
Rick- A couple years ago. We tried him out, he seemed...to fit.
Rose- He's the only other person that'll get along with Rick.
Rick- Or at least projects the illusion of getting along with me as well as everybody else does.

How long- this more of a curiosity question- how long were you together before "Flower Plower"?

Rose- That's a good question, I like that question. We recorded that in 1988, right? We recorded...
Rick-We recorded the first stuff, the stuff that was recorded with me producing and our first drummer, Shannon, a year after we were together, almost exactly a year...after we were together. And the second batch of songs with Steve Albini recording a year after that, so...the band started in '87 and we recorded the summer of '88 and '89. I think the...record came out like in January of 1990. So two years...

Rose- And all that time in between there, I mean we toured. We played as many shows as we could as far away from our area as possible and that's how we got the record to come out. Somebody saw us, some guy named Mike Potential saw us in Chicago which is three hours away from where we...where we're based, and he said, "Wow! You guys are great I want to put out your record." So, that's how it happened.

Were you really familiar with the whole band thing before Poster Children...

Rick- Yeah we had been in bands, I mean, there was a band before Poster Children, with the two of us and a drummer also that was basically the same thing, except we just didn't...changed the name, after that drummer left, so, once we started the band with Shannon, we had the name Poster Children, and when Shannon left we just kept the name... so we'd been in a band, the two of us (indicating Rose) had been in a band that was very similar to...that would be Poster Children a year before that, or a year or two before that we were in other bands that played some originals, and some covers, punk rock things, it was...actually yeah, Rose and I have been playing together almost...ten years now?
Rose- Ten years?!
Rick- 1986...
Rose- Yeah, you're probably right.
Rick-Yeah, it's getting close. And it was December of '85 that Rose joined.
Rose- So I have been playing bass for ten years. Yikes.

Um, I guess the only other question I have is just out of curiosity also. There's a reference to Kay again? Is there a story behind that?

Rick- It fit? It fit in rhythmically. I mean...that's pretty much the reason everything goes in...in the songs, is that they fit. Writing lyrics is such a...a uhh...I want to say terrifying, painful...not painful, it's not like I'm suffering, it just takes so long, it's like grrrr, you know trying to fit a balloon into a box of nails or something.
Rose- Ha! That's beautiful.

Rick- Haven't you ever seen that magic trick where the guy, and there's a balloon, and they put the nails through the balloon.

Well, um...I'm trying to think of more questions...Oh, what other bands have influenced you?

Rose- See, now we were influenced by all the touring bands of the late eighties and stuff...
Rick- That's more philosophical, it's like how to you know, just go on the road and do stuff, but in terms of what we're listening to now, I'm trying to think of what I...I haven't listened to anything for a week or two in the van but, we're now just listening to Jim's...
Jim- Oop!
Rick-...Crackwork (?) tape.
Jim- I don't have anything new, I just, wow...I got the new "Live at Leeds" you know it's old, but it's the new CD re-issue of "The Who Live at Leeds" with over twice as much music on it, which is really great.
Rick- It's amazing that...the way they played at that time, they'd just go off on these improvisations. And it's not like stupid, you know, hippie wandering...well it is kind of, but it's a little more intense than just hippie...you know...thing. I mean, it's a cool record.
Rose- A little more intense...
Rick- Yeah, more intense than you know, hippie, you know music just kind of goes off...

Have you noticed the hippie influence up here, especially in Burlington, just like, all the hippies have moved up here to settle...(we relate a story about dead heads at a Fugazi show)

Rose- What band played?

Um, Fugazi

Rose- Oh, Fugazi. Oh see, I guess you (Rick) were saying that Fugazi and the Grateful Dead are hippies.
Rick- No, I know that hippie thing...I...uh, did I ever say that? I remember thinking the Butthole Surfers were good, which makes Grateful Dead about ten years ago...

Rose- You said Fugazi because they put out their own records.
Rick- Yeah it's true actually, that they have similarities in ways...
Rose- And they have followings...
Rick- I mean the Grateful Dead have, I guess, a certain circuitous route to this, but the independence they have I respect, the way they book their shows, and run their whole organization, I think that's wonderful, and I think that has similarities to Fugazi. Actually, I'm sure Fugazi can learn a lot from them, when they get more and more popular to the point where they're playing stadiums like the Grateful Dead do. I mean, obviously, Fugazi's going to have to run their organization similar to the Grateful Dead.

Ian MacKaye would have a lot of people to be pissed off at.

Rose- He already does.
Rick- And the other similarities are, like, the Grateful Dead all...their fans, some of them are...they have to actually, you know like the camping, the band camping at their shows and stuff like that because some of the problems that their fans have been generating, or used to generate at some of the shows. They were starting to get banned from towns, and that's the sort of the same thing that happens to Fugazi. They have certain fans that are like...they're not really fans, they're like guys who come to the shows, and they pay their five dollars to get in, but they're really pissed off at the band. And...which I don't understand, it's like, it's...I think they have that uncontrollable element, too, you know, it's sort of similarities there, so I do see similarities, besides music, you know the musical differences are...it's philosophical...
Rose- I hope Fugazi doesn't hear what you're saying, they'll get really mad it you.

We'll be sure to write it up that you stressed the, uh, their independence.

Rick- But the hippie influence, yeah, I don't know, I haven't been around here enough, but I do know about it. The guy we knew who got our first gig used to live in Vermont, said...he worked at a radio station, program director at a big commercial radio

station, he's the guy who broke the Spin Doctors, so obviously...
Rose- That's a hippie band.
Rick- Yeah. That's the kind of vibe we got.
Jim- It's like the Spin Doctors...
Rick- It's also like northern California, our manager used to manage this band, called Leroy Ropin', they were from a town called Davis, California, which is near Sacramento, talking about how... its the old hippie community is getting weirder and weirder and that they're really liberal, but...they're getting kind of fascist in their old age, you know, the no smoking laws, are one aspect of it but I've tried to remember the extremes they were going to, but I can't remember what he was describing.
Rose-Like the Canadian thing, or something...
Rick- It's like where you...you...like the Canadian pornography laws that are so broadly worded, supposedly to protect women and children, but wind up being used to cancel out free speech. Very liberal views that wind up being a lot more...closer to conservatives. Like when liberals get so left and the right-wingers get so right, that they wind up agreeing with each other. They're very liberal, when they get older they get conservative, but in a very strange way.

I forgot to ask on the Descendants question, were you given a choice of covers?

Rick- Yeah.

Well, what made you pick, "I Don't Wanna Grow Up"?

Rick- It was the record we had, and it seemed appropriate.
Rose- Cool bass line, too. We were going to do that one, we were going to do "Rock Star". But there was some question as to whether or not we should do the compilation, we're not really supposed to do stuff like that without asking.

I have a question based on technical stuff...when you write songs, do you basically have a practice and just sort of jam with riffs and come up with something, or is it...

Rick- Yeah, that's basically what we build the songs from with all four of us together in the room.

So there's not really...you don't start with any idea, any concrete idea and work from that, its just a free-for-all?

Rick- Oh, yeah, did that a long long time ago. But then every time, we wound up writing a song, we'd work on the written out songs, then we'd wind up, you know, jamming, or whatever, and come up with a song, that's always better, so I think...it's just...the songs were always better, when all four of us or three of us- earlier on when there was just three of us- when all three or four of us worked together on them.
Rose- Yeah, it's important, it's the most important thing in the band, is not to have four people showing off how great their technique is, but to have four people trying to make a whole sound, and listening to each other, and, you know, "Maybe I would really love to play this one bass part that goes, you know, has a real lot of notes in it", but its better to just play one note because it makes the song sound better. So...I think that's what helps out the band a lot, leaving your ego outside the door.
Rick-And I'm too lazy to write complete songs. Once you start doing that it's like "Why do I have to sit there for hours at home trying to write songs?" Now I'll just wait for everybody else, you know, we'll just all do it together. It's much easier to do once you get into the hang of things and you're with people that you can communicate with. It's the easiest way to write a song, and the easiest way to stay interested in the song cause you've written the part you're playing. So it's not like you're playing somebody else's part...except for of course the drummer, he's always playing a couple songs that the last drummer wrote.

So do you ever wind up in the uncomfortable situation of disliking somebody else's part and having to tell them about it?

Rick- Sure...it teaches you...
Rose- What, having to talk to those people?
Rick- ...yeah, in a very personal way cause it's a very sensitive situation, cause it's creative for people, and putting forth something that's sort of part of themselves. Like you say "Well no, I don't like it", it can be really dangerous but that's part of being in a band...is being able to handle...
Rose- Yeah. That's the one big thing about-
Rick- You know where to draw the line. I mean, where not to

push it to a point where it's, you know, everything has to be way over-compromised.
Rose- Yeah, and Rick is really good at...well, we'll have a song and I'll be like "OK we're done. Come on, we're done, let's go" and Rick's like "Nope". So...and we're just going "grrrr" but you know, "Come on already, it's not perfect yet." You (Rick) know when it's perfect...It's good to have one person, one slave driver...

Did you think, um, you encounter those type of problems less and less the more, well, I don't want to say the older you get but, the wiser you get maybe?

Rick- I can say yes but that's just because we haven't written songs together for awhile now and we always go through a phase...we write songs, record it, and then we go on tour, and we haven't written any songs for at least six...oh no, almost a year now right?
Rose- Yeah, but you know, I think-
Rick- If I remember it was kind of a struggle. It's always kind of a struggle.
Rose- Yeah, but we never...yeah, I think what you said is true, I mean, cause I see it when I'm touring too, we're all stuck in the van together, we're stuck in the van for like twenty hours or something together, but nobody's...there's no whining, no "When are we gonna get there?" So...we're all older, and realize that we could be sitting in a cubicle and typing or something...waiting for the nine o'clock buzzer or something...I feel like we all act like grown ups on tours...
Rick- Most of the time we do-
Rose- Well most of us do.
Rick- I guess you want to ask us if we were writing songs for the next question...

Yeah, do you ever have anything left over after you-

Rose- No
Rick- We were going to after the last record but we wound up putting out the EP before the record so all the left-overs came out first. What we had left though was we basically had 17 tracks and it's like, well, "The album's not going to be able to come out

until after the first year, we want something out, so at least put out an EP." So we were going to have extras but, yeah, we always seem to find a way to put everything out. Cause it's similar to the way we work, whereas, always also the way we work is we maybe start out with a lot of stuff, I mean bits and pieces, but we always narrow it down to...something that we remember from the last practice that sticks in our minds or, it's always a process of...Whereas some bands have thirty songs that are almost there, and then they just pick ten or fifteen out of those thirty to put out, we are...we're finished with the songs when we decide to record them so they're...we consider them all pretty much to be worth it when we're planning what to put out. It would be nice to have a choice of thirty songs but...
Rose- I heard that's what Fugazi did.
Rick- Yeah, Fugazi also took two years off.

Is their new one out now?

Rick- It's out in Europe actually.
Rose- It's out in Europe? Wow. How did it get out in Europe?
Rick- Well, they're on tour in Europe. It's done...in the summer. I think it's...they wanted the record out when they were touring.
Rose- Yeah, that makes sense obviously. It's supposed to come out here in June.
Rick- We stole a copy from a guy who works at Dischord. It's pretty cool. It's a little different, I think that the break gave them some time to try out different things.

That's cool, their sound was getting a bit monotonous.

Rick- Yeah, they've definitely put a little more into this...so it's really great. I listened to all but the first couple songs...They've definitely needed the break I think.

Maybe the articulation is back...Well...thank you very much.

Rick- Yeah.
Rose- Thank you.

Loose in New York, Thousands Riot

by David Bratton, NYU Student and Quantum Physicist

The other day I was depressed. I was doing some soul searching, hoping to ascertain my place in this wacky, mixed-up experiment some of us occasionally call "society." The root of my depression was pretty basic. I felt alone and isolated because I was not enrolled at one of these modern, pot-smoking, pseudo-hippie, Phish listening, communist doctrine chanting, small liberal arts colleges that are blighting the country like locusts. I mean, man, like, what's up with my generation? NYU isn't exactly a friendly place, and New York tends to become somewhat hectic during rush hour. I felt alone and isolated in a Big School in a Big City where Big Brother was most likely watching me.

But then my good friend Pauls called me from this tiny, hick-town college in the middle of nowhere that he's inexplicably decided to attend for four years. "Man, Dave," he said. "I've got way to much work to do and not enough money to spend. I can't make it to New York for the Foo Fighters! concert this Thursday. Would you go and write a review for me?"
Would I go? Would I go! Of course, I would go! The Foo Fighters! concert had been sold out for three weeks! It had been sold out since the dawn of time! It had been sold out for longer than the starry breadth of eternity!

"I'll go," I said, "but only if you give me the ticket for free."

So after a bit of wrangling, we decided on a fair price, and, come Thursday night, I had forgotten my bout with depression, and was walking in the door to CBGB's, a New York club that is most likely the coolest place on Earth (editor's note: too many commas)

Let me say right now that I had heard in advance that the Foo Fighters! tour was kicking ass and taking names. People said that Eddie Veder was making cameo appearances and singing with Mike Watt, the performer for whom Foo Fighters! were opening. I had heard that all along the tour, famous musicians would wander out of the audience and onto the stage, grab a guitar tech by the collar, get outfitted with a Fender Strat, and

play along for the whole set. So, I was prepared to be stunned and amazed, awed and inspired. I was hoping for a feast for the musical mind.

Nothing I could have done would have prepared me for that night. If I hoped to be fed, then I was treated to a enormous bacchanalia. When I anticipated water, I was given whiskey. Where I had wished for a caffeine pill, I was intravenously injected with amphetamines and crack. This was, barring the famous Blind Melon/Van Halen show in Leeds, England, the greatest concert of all time.

The Foo Fighters! took the stage with a calm which foretold little of the noise-fest which was to come. First came Pat Smear, the ex-Germs and ex-Nirvana guitarist, then two other guys who I'd never heard of, and finally, Dave Grohl, Nirvana's ex-drummer. They proceeded into a loud, power-chord laden song that had an impressive melodic hook. There is, it seems, life after Nirvana for Grohl and Smear. Grohl performed admirably well on guitar.

Their encore song was "Marigold," a little known track originally released on Nirvana's Heart Shaped Box single. The version of the song which appears on the single has Dave Grohl singing lead vocals, with harmonies from Kurt Cobain. It was eerie hearing Smear sing Cobain's parts, at times achieving an exact replica of Kurt's wonderfully strung-out, cigarette-smoke voice.

Mike Watt was amazing as well, and there were, as promised, cameo appearances from Eddie Veder and Evan Dando of the Lemonheads. Veder sang lead vocals on "Against the 70's," a track that appears on Watt's new album.
After the show, I managed to squeeze backstage with a friend, and we spent the rest of the night schmoozing with the performers. I'm too tired and lazy to tell you guys everything (and some of it I would have to censor anyway - this is, after all, a family oriented publication, right?) but I will say that Dave Grohl is a great guy. He is very friendly and outgoing. He seemed to be genuinely interested in us when we introduced ourselves, and we talked with him for about fifteen minutes.

Eddie Veder, however, is two feet tall. Well, more like five-foot four. And on this night, he was fairly wasted.
Anyways, that's all folks. Hope this FMphasis thing comes out